

R277. Education, Administration.

R277-503. Licensing Routes.

R277-503-1. Definitions.

A. "Alternative Routes to Licensure (ARL) advisors" mean a USOE specialist with specific professional development and educator licensing expertise, and a USOE-designated curriculum specialist.

B. "Board" means the Utah State Board of Education.

C. "Competency-based" means a teacher training approach structured for an individual to master and demonstrate content and teaching skills and knowledge at the individual's own pace and sometimes in alternative settings.

D. "Educational Testing Service (ETS)" is a worldwide educational testing and measurement organization.

E. "Endorsement" means a qualification based on content area mastery obtained through a higher education major or minor or through a state-approved endorsement program.

F. "Letter of authorization" means a formal approval given to an individual such as an out-of-state candidate or a first year ARL candidate who is employed by a school district/charter school in a position requiring a professional educator license who has not completed the requirements for an ARL license or a Level 1, 2, or 3 license or who has not completed necessary endorsement requirements. A teacher working under a letter of authorization cannot be designated highly qualified under R277-520-1G.

G. "Level 1 license" means a Utah professional educator license issued upon completion of an approved preparation program or an alternative preparation program, or pursuant to an agreement under the NASDTEC Interstate Contract, to applicants who have also met all ancillary requirements established by law or rule.

H. "Level 2 license" means a Utah professional educator license issued after satisfaction of all requirements for a Level 1 license and:

(1) requirements established by law or rule;

(2) three years of successful education experience within a five-year period; and

(3) satisfaction of requirements under R277-522 for teachers employed after January 1, 2003.

I. "Level 3 license" means a Utah professional educator license issued to an educator who holds a current Utah Level 2 license and has also received National Board Certification or a doctorate in education or in a field related to a content area in a unit of the public education system or an accredited private school.

J. "National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC)" is an educator information clearinghouse that maintains an interstate reciprocity agreement and database for its members regarding educators whose licenses have been suspended or revoked.

K. "National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)" is a nationally recognized organization which accredits the education units providing baccalaureate and graduate degree programs for the preparation of teachers and other professional personnel for elementary and secondary schools.

L. "NCLB core academic subject" means English, reading or

language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography.

M. "Pedagogical knowledge" means practices and strategies of teaching, classroom management, preparation and planning that go beyond an educator's content knowledge of an academic discipline.

N. "Praxis II - Principles of Learning and Teaching" is a standards-based test provided by ETS and designed to assess a beginning teacher's pedagogical knowledge. This test is used by many states as part of their teacher licensing process. Colleges and universities may use this test as an exit exam from teacher education programs. All Utah Level 1 license holders employed or reemployed after January 1, 2003 shall pass this test prior to the issuance of a Level 2 professional educator license consistent with R277-522-1H(3).

O. "Regional accreditation" means formal approval of a school that has met standards considered to be essential for the operation of a quality school program by the following organizations:

- (1) Middle States Commission on Higher Education;
- (2) New England Association of Schools and Colleges;
- (3) North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement;
- (4) Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities;
- (5) Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; and
- (6) Western Association of Schools and colleges: Senior College Commission.

P. "Restricted endorsement" means a qualification based on content area knowledge obtained through a USOE-approved program of study or test and shall be available only to teachers in necessarily existent small school settings and teachers in youth in custody programs.

Q. "State-approved Endorsement Plan (SAEP)" means a plan in place developed between the USOE and a licensed educator to direct the completion of endorsement requirements by the educator.

R. "Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC)" is a nationally recognized organization which provides accreditation of professional teacher education programs in institutions offering baccalaureate and graduate degrees for the preparation of K-12 teachers.

S. "USOE" means the Utah State Office of Education.

R277-503-2. Authority and Purpose.

A. This rule is authorized by Article X, Section 3 of the Utah Constitution, which places general control and supervision of the public schools under the Board, Section 53A-1-402(1)(a) which directs the Board to establish rules and minimum standards for the qualification and licensing of educators and ancillary personnel who provide direct student services, and Section 53A-1-401(3) which allows the Board to adopt rules in accordance with its responsibilities.

B. The purpose of this rule is to provide minimum eligibility requirements for applicants for teacher licenses and to provide explanation and criteria of various teacher licensing routes. The rule also provides criteria and procedures for licensed teachers to earn endorsements and the requirement for all applicants for

licenses to have and pass criminal background checks.

R277-503-3. USOE Licensing Eligibility.

A. Traditional college/university license - A license applicant shall have completed an approved college/university teacher preparation program, been recommended for licensing, and shall have satisfied all other requirements for educator licensing required by law; or

B. Alternative Licensing Route

(1) A license applicant shall have a bachelors degree or higher from an accredited higher education institution in an area related to the position he seeks; and

(2) A license applicant shall have skills, talents or abilities, as evaluated by the employing entity, making the applicant appropriate for a licensed teaching position and eligible to participate in an ARL program.

(3) While beginning an alternative licensing program, an applicant shall be approved for employment under a letter of authorization for a maximum of one school year and may be employed under an ARL license for an additional two years. An ARL program may not exceed three school years. ARL candidates who receive ARL licensure status may be designated highly qualified under R277-520-1G.

C. All license applicants seeking a Level 1 Utah educator license or an area of concentration or an endorsement in an NCLB core academic subject area after March 3, 2007 shall submit passing score(s) on a rigorous Board-designated content test, where tests are available, prior to the issuance of a renewable license or endorsement.

(1) Early childhood (K-3) and elementary majors (1-8) are required to submit a passing score from a rigorous Board-designated content test.

(2) Secondary teachers are required to submit passing scores on a rigorous Board-designated content test(s), where test(s) are available, for each endorsement NCLB core academic area to be posted on the license.

(3) An applicant shall submit electronic or original documentation of USOE-designated passing score(s).

D. Any educator seeking a Utah Level 1 license who submits a score below the final Utah state passing score on the test designated in R277-503-3C shall be issued a nonrenewable conditional Level 1 license. If the educator fails to submit a passing score on a rigorous Board-designated content test during the three-year duration of the conditional Level 1 license, the educator's license or endorsement shall lapse on the educator's renewal date.

E. The credentials and documentation of experience of applicants for Level 2 and 3 professional educator licenses shall be evaluated by the USOE to determine the appropriate license level.

R277-503-4. Licensing Routes.

Applicants who seek Utah licenses shall successfully complete accredited programs or legislatively mandated programs consistent

with this rule.

A. Institution of higher education teacher preparation programs shall be:

(1) Nationally accredited by:

(a) NCATE; or

(b) TEAC; or

(2) Regionally accredited competency-based teacher preparation programs as provided under R277-503-1N.

B. USOE Alternative Routes to Licensure (ARL)

(1) To be eligible to begin the ARL program, an applicant for an elementary or early childhood school position shall have a bachelors degree and at least 27 semester hours of applicable content courses distributed among elementary curriculum areas. Elementary curriculum areas are provided under R277-700-4. To proceed from temporary license status, an ARL applicant shall submit a score on the ETS Praxis II Elementary Education Content Knowledge Examination (0014) to be used as a diagnostic tool and as part of the development of a professional plan and the issuance of the ARL license.

(2) To be eligible to begin the ARL program, applicants for secondary school positions shall hold a degree major or major equivalent directly related to the assignment. To proceed from temporary license status an ARL license applicant shall submit a score on identified ETS Praxis II Applicable Content Knowledge test(s) where available to be used as a diagnostic tool and as part of the development of a professional plan and the issuance of the ARL license.

(3) Licensing by Agreement

(a) An individual employed by a school district shall satisfy the minimum requirements of R277-503-3 as a teacher with appropriate skills, training or ability for an identified licensed teaching position in the district.

(b) An applicant shall obtain an ARL application for licensing from the USOE or USOE web site.

(c) After evaluation of candidate transcript(s), and rigorous Board-designated content test score, the USOE ARL advisors and the candidate shall determine the specific content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge required of the license applicant to satisfy the requirements for licensing.

(d) The USOE ARL advisors may identify institution of higher education courses, district inservice classes, Board-approved training, or Board-approved competency tests to prepare or indicate content, content-specific, and developmentally-appropriate pedagogical knowledge required for licensing.

(e) The employing school district shall assign a trained mentor to work with the applicant for licensing by agreement.

(f) The school district shall supervise and assess the license applicant's classroom performance during a minimum one school year full-time employment experience. The district may request assistance from a institution of higher education or the USOE in the monitoring and assessment.

(g) The school district shall assess the license applicant's disposition as a teacher following a minimum one school year full-time teaching experience. The district may request assistance in

this assessment; and

(h) The USOE ARL advisors shall annually review and evaluate the license applicant following training, assessments or course work, and the full-time teaching experience and evaluation by the school district.

(i) Consistent with evidence and documentation received, the USOE ARL advisor may recommend the license applicant to the Board for a Level 1 educator license.

(4) USOE Licensing by Competency

(a) A school district employs an individual as a teacher with appropriate skills, training or ability for an identified licensed teaching position in the district who satisfies the minimum requirements of R277-503-3.

(b) An employing school district, in consultation with the applicant and the USOE, shall identify Board-approved content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge examinations. The applicant shall pass designated examinations demonstrating the applicant's adequate preparation and readiness for licensing.

(c) The employing school district shall assign a trained mentor to work with the applicant for licensing by competency.

(d) The school district shall monitor and assess the license applicant's classroom performance during a minimum one-year full-time teaching experience.

(e) The school district shall assess the license applicant's disposition for teaching following a minimum one-year full-time teaching experience.

(f) The school district may request assistance in the monitoring or assessment of a license applicant's classroom performance or disposition for teaching.

(g) Following the one-year training period, the school district and USOE shall verify all aspects of preparation (content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, classroom performance skills, and disposition for teaching) to the USOE.

(h) If all evidence/documentation is complete, the USOE shall recommend the applicant for a Level 1 educator license.

(5) USOE ARL candidates under R277-503-4B(3) and (4) may teach under a letter of authorization for a maximum of one year. The letter of authorization shall expire after the first year on June 30 when the ARL candidate submits documentation of progress in the program, and the candidate shall be issued an ARL license.

(6) The ARL license may be extended annually for two subsequent school years with documentation of progress in the ARL program.

(7) Documentation shall include, specifically, a copy of the supervisor's successful end-of-year evaluation, copies of transcripts and test results or both showing completion of required coursework, verification of working with a trained mentor, and satisfaction of the full-time full year experience.

C. School district/charter school specific competency-based licenses:

(1) A local board/charter school board may apply to the Board for a letter of authorization to fill a position in the district.

(2) The employing school district/charter school shall request a letter of authorization no later than 60 days after the

date of the individual's first day of employment.

(3) The application for the letter of authorization from the local board/charter school board for an individual to teach one or more core academic subjects shall provide documentation of:

(a) the individual's bachelors degree; and

(b) for a K-6 grade teacher, the satisfactory results of the rigorous state test including subject knowledge and teaching skills in the required core academic subjects under Section 53A-6-104.5(3)(ii) as approved by the Board; or

(c) for the teacher in grades 7-12, demonstration of a high level of competency in each of the core academic subjects in which the teacher teaches by completion of an academic major, a graduate degree, course work equivalent to an undergraduate academic major, advanced certification or credentialing, results or scores of a rigorous state core academic subject test, similar to the test required under R277-503-3E, in each of the core academic subjects in which the teacher teaches.

(4) The application for the letter of authorization from the local board/charter school board for non-core teachers in grades K-12 shall provide documentation of:

(a) a bachelors degree, associates degree or skill certification; and

(b) skills, talents or abilities specific to the teaching assignment, as determined by the local board/charter school board.

(5) Following receipt of documentation and consistent with Section 53A-6-104.5(2), the USOE shall approve a district/charter school specific competency-based license.

(6) If an individual with a district/charter school specific competency-based license leaves the district before the end of the employment period, the district shall notify the USOE Licensing Section regarding the end-of-employment date.

(7) The individual's district/charter school specific competency-based license shall be valid only in the district/charter school that originally requested the letter of authorization and for the individual originally employed under the letter of authorization or district/charter school specific competency-based license.

(8) The written copy of the district/charter school specific competency-based license shall prominently state the name of the school district/charter school followed by DISTRICT/CHARTER SCHOOL SPECIFIC COMPETENCY-BASED LICENSE.

(9) A school district/charter school may change the assignment of a school district/charter school specific competency-based license holder but notice to USOE shall be required and additional competency-based documentation may be required for the teacher to remain qualified or highly qualified.

(10) School district/charter school specific competency-based license holders are at-will employees consistent with Section 53A-8-106(5).

R277-503-5. Endorsement Routes.

A. An applicant shall successfully complete one of the following for endorsement:

(1) a USOE-approved institution of higher education educator

preparation program with endorsement(s); or

(2) assessment, approval and recommendation by a designated and subject-appropriate USOE specialist under a SAEP. The USOE shall be responsible for final recommendation and approval; or

(3) a USOE-approved Utah institution of higher education or Utah school district-sponsored endorsement program which includes content knowledge and content-specific pedagogical knowledge approved by the USOE. The university or school district shall be responsible for final review and recommendation. The USOE shall be responsible for final approval.

B. A restricted endorsement shall be available and limited to teachers in necessarily existent small schools as determined under R277-445, and teachers in youth in custody programs. Teacher qualifications shall include at least nine semester hours of USOE-approved university-level courses in each course taught by the teacher holding a restricted endorsement.

C. All provisions that directly affect the health and safety of students required for endorsements, such as prerequisites for drivers education teachers or coaches, shall apply to applicants seeking endorsements through all routes under this rule.

D. Prior to an individual taking courses, exams or seeking a recommendation in the ARL licensing program, the individual shall have school district/charter school and USOE authorization.

R277-503-6. Additional Provisions.

A. All programs or assessments used in applicant preparation shall meet national professional educator standards such as those developed by NCATE, TEAC or competency-based regional accreditation.

B. All educators licensed under this rule shall also:

(1) complete the background check required under Section 53A-6-401;

(2) satisfy the professional development requirements of R277-502; and

(3) be subject to all Utah licensing requirements and professional standards.

C. An applicant may satisfy the student teaching/clinical experience requirement for licensing through successful completion of either the licensing by agreement or by competency route.

KEY: teachers, alternative licensing

Date of Enactment or Last Substantive Amendment: May 9, 2007

Notice of Continuation March 29, 2007

Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: Art X Sec 3; 53A-1-402(1)(a); 53A-1-401(3)